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ABSTRACT

In addition to presenting background information on Mozambique's struggle for independence from Portugal, this module contains compare-and-contrast exercises and enrichment activities. The background discussion includes a historical sketch of political events prior to Mozambique's independence in 1975 and presents excerpts from the writings of two native political leaders. The lesson plan asks students to compare and contrast general features of British and Portuguese colonial empires; military aspects of the struggle for independence; the "critical period" in the United States and Mozambique after independence was won in each country; and human rights in each of the two countries after their independence. The enrichment activities encourage students to use their knowledge of Mozambique in an analysis of political, racial, and economic developments in Rhodesia and South Africa. A bibliography lists four books about Mozambique's political struggle and Portugal's collapse in Africa. (Author/DB)

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INDEPENDENCE COMPARED AND CONTRASTED : THE UNITED STATES AND MOZAMBIQUE

In April 1974 a military coup brought down the government of Marcelo Caetano who had been prime minister of Portugal since 1968. Caetano had assumed power from Antonio Salazar who had ruled Portugal since 1926.

Recognition by military leaders of the futility of the colonial wars which Portugal had been waging since 1962 to hold on to her colonial empire in Africa was a major cause of the coup. The new Portuguese government recognized the right to self-determination both in Mozambique and in the other Portuguese colonies in Africa, including Angola and Guinea-Bissau.

The Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), the group representing the Mozambican people, signed an agreement with Portugal setting June 25, 1975 as the date of independence. The same agreement provided for a provisional government comprised of FRELIMO leaders and Portuguese officials to administer the country in the interim. Joaquin Chissano, a FRELIMO leader, served as premier in the provisional/transitional government.

Samora Machel, successor to Eduardo Mondlane, the founder of FRELIMO, who had been assassinated in 1969, became president upon the achievement of full independence.

Brief excerpts from the writings of both Machel and Mondlane follow.

SP 009 629

Independence Compared and Contrasted: The United States and Mozambique

THE ECONOMIST JUNE 28, 1975

Mozambique

Machelismo

FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
Lourenço Marques

Thousands of rain-soaked but jubilant Mozambiquans watched as the Portuguese flag was lowered for the last time in Lourenço Marques on Tuesday night. Mr Samora Machel, who was sworn in as Mozambique's first president, made an independence-day speech pledging that there would be no room for "profoundly retrograde and reactionary structures" in the new radical socialist people's republic. As president of both the single, leninist party and the country, Mr Machel was given wide powers under the new constitution published this week. He will keep both positions until Mozambique's first general election, which is meant to be held within a year after Mr Machel's Frelimo party holds a congress some time this year.

The final accord with Portugal, ending its responsibilities for its former colony, has yet to be published. But the Portuguese are understood to have handed over to the Frelimo government all nationalised Portuguese banks and insurance companies in Mozambique, with some provision for compensation for insurance company assets. The Cabora Bassa dam, described by Mr Machel on Tuesday as a "criminal project", will continue to be run by Portugal with the aid of some foreign technicians belonging to countries, other than South Africa, which have previously had a hand in the project. Frelimo will gradually acquire the operating company's assets over 10–15 years.

The all-important negotiations with South Africa over the price of electricity supplies are still going on. Frelimo wants to double the price per unit—which would still be substantially to South Africa's advantage, given the extremely low original supply price. There are reports that part of the payment might be in South African gold. This would be equivalent to quintupling the electricity price, since Frelimo would then be at liberty to sell the gold in the free market at three times the official price at which it was supplied.

President Machel gave no clear sign during the independence celebrations about how his country will deal with South Africa and Rhodesia, except to declare that "we will not coexist with fascist and colonialist states". There is no doubt in anybody's mind that Frelimo intends to support the African nationalists in Rhodesia, but effective and efficient sanctions—through cutting off supplies along the Beira railway line—might take two or three months to organise. South Africa's consulate in Lourenço Marques quietly closed this week.

"The 25th of September - Mark it! That day may well go down as one of the most important in the history of Africa - not just Mozambique. Our struggle is more than one nation. It is the beginning of the liberation of southern Africa, and ... who knows, it may well lead to the liberation of Portugal itself."

Eduardo Mondlane. 1969.

"Mozambican Women and Men
FRELIMO militants and combatants,

The investiture of the Transitional Government opens a new phase in our history, the phase of the final march toward independence. A giant step had been taken from the day ten years before when FRELIMO had proclaimed "The General Armed Insurrection of the Mozambican People against Portuguese Colonialism for the attainment of the complete independence of Mozambique"...

We want to reconstruct our land, we are fighting to have a free nation.

A free nation means: to have no more slaves, to have schools for all, health services for all, work for all, land for all...

Free nation in doing away with hunger,
Free nation is to end misery,
Free nation is to do away with illiteracy,
Free nation is doing away with the exploitation of the Black man by the white man, of the national by the foreigner, of man by man.

We are engaged in a revolution whose advance depends on the creation of the new man, with a new mentality."

Samora Machel,
September 20, 1974.

INDEPENDENCE COMPARED AND CONTRASTED :

WHITHER THE STRUGGLE FOR MOZAMBIQUE ?

- LESSON PLAN -

Eduardo Mondlane, the martyred founder and first president of FRELIMO, titled his book describing its origins and activities, "The Struggle for Mozambique". That struggle was part of an on-going resistance, waged simultaneously by the other colonies of Portugal in Africa - Angola and Guinea-Bissau. It also is part of the larger series of modern resistance to colonial rule which began with the struggle of the English colonies in America for equality and ultimately for political independence. A comparison and contrast of those two struggles is an interesting exercise.

Compare and contrast the two colonial powers - the United Kingdom and Portugal.

Comparisons

Both political leaders enjoyed lengthy rule:

George III - U.K. - 1760-1820;
Salazar - Portugal - 1926-1968;
Caetano - Portugal - 1968-1974.

Powers of both relatively unlimited.

George III - king throughout the Napoleonic era.
Salazar - rule unchallenged.

Salazar not a king but almost a regent.
George III - some question of mental competency in final years of reign; regent served then.

Both resisted concessions because of concern for prestige, authority and implications for other territories.

Differences

George III a king - Salazar/Caetano not.
Responses of colonial population and the indigenous population.

Portugal: colonial population loyal; indigenous population in revolt.

United Kingdom: indigenous population "loyal"; colonists in revolt.

.../2

Compare and contrast the military struggle for independence.

Comparisons

Both were long wars:

United Kingdom: 1775-1781 (peace in 1783)
Portugal: 1964-1974

Both used relatively small numbers of men.

Leaders of the revolt tended to be middle class.
Outside aid essential: French for United States; Russia-China-Scandinavia for Mozambicans.

Differences

Greater role of women in Portuguese situation.

Mozambicans based outside the country (Tanzania)

Training largely received outside Mozambique (Friendship Institute, Solidarity Hospital, Villages also outside).

How does the "critical period" immediately after independence compare and contrast (as far as possible)?

Comparisons

Very few except that both experienced difficult times in this period.

Contrasts

FRELIMO, a political party, initiated and carried out the struggle in Mozambique.

Political parties did not emerge in the U.S. until after the Constitution was ratified.

FRELIMO's authority seems secure.

Authority of U.S. government under Articles of Confederation challenged.

FRELIMO clear as to ultimate objectives. Political and economic structures delineated.

Colonists actions simply "freedom" oriented.
Political action dominant.

("Critical period" compared and contrasted)... continued	United States most concerned with Britain and France during and immediately following struggle.
	Mozambicans function in a tri-polar world with Portugal, South Africa, and the United States/Russia/China - three separate powers to be considered (not necessarily true that allies in struggle persist afterwards).
To what extent is the comparison of human rights after independence possible?	Machel salutes the women first; a signal of sympathy for their aspirations.
	Women's rights largely ignored in post-independent United States.
	FRELIMO asserts non-racial character of new nation - there are whites in the Cabinet.
	Treatment of both Blacks and Native Americans (Indians) shabby in terms of Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
Summary:	
Whither the struggle for Mozambique?	Things look good but there are enormous problems - economic, political and social.

Enrichment:

How might relations develop with the white minority regimes of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and the Republic of South Africa?

1. Mozambique is no longer a buffer state between white minority regimes and Black Africa.

2. Sanctions against Rhodesia honoring United Nations action are possible/likely including closing Mozambican ports (Beira and Lourenco Marques) to trade to both South Africa and Rhodesia.

3. South Africans to be excluded from participating in the new company operating the Cabora Bassa Dam.

4. Price of hydroelectric power to be raised for both powers.

5. Mozambican independence brings hope to oppressed Black majority in the Republic of South Africa.

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